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ADAM KUBERT TALKS ABOUT WOLVERINE #75

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INTRODUCTION:

Adam Kubert has a gifted heritage to live up to, and so far, he has. Actually, there isn't much of a history of sons following in their father's footsteps in comics, except on strips like Blondie and Hagar the Horrible. Usually, the strip's fame doesn't grow much under them. After all, their job is to make the stuff as much like their father's as possible.

The work of Adam and his brother Andy is a diffferent matter. They have achieved success in comic books like their father, but in an entirely different area. Joe Kubert has done virtually everything in his time, but his fame stems from his work on action titles, especially DC war titles like Sgt. Rock. Adam has cut his teeth on super-heroes, especially at Marvel. Much of the younger crowd that dominates comics is unfamiliar with his father's work; they pick up Adam Kubert on his own merits.

This is not so much because Joe Kubert's style has become obsolete, but because the action genres he specialized in have fallen out of favor. But thanks to his work at the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art, his influence continues to be felt. After all, every time a comic book fan looks at the work of Adam or Andy, or for that matter, other Kubert alumni such as Steve Bissette (Swamp Thing) or Rick Veitch (Brat Pack), they are looking at the artistic heritage of Joe Kubert.

Thomas Harrington

ADAM:

Clifford Meth: You're taking over Wolverine with issue #75, so you're coming in at a pretty interesting time. Following guys like John Byrne, John Buscema, Silvestri, Texeira, and Dwayne Turner is no easy task. These are some powerful artists with their own sizable followings. Is it at all intimidating coming onto a book like this?

AK: Yeah, it's intimidating. I'm trying to become as familiar with the character as possible. What I did was I got all the *Wolverines* from issue #1 until now. I started off by reading "Weapon X". I figured this was a good start-off point, and that juiced me. Reading what Barry Smith did. The reason I started there was because the art I thought was phenomenal. Then I started with issue #33 where Larry Hama started to write. It's intimidating. These guys don't screw around. They know what they're doing.

CM: How seriously does the 'X' office take this book? I mean do you have to sit around and have 'X' meetings, Mutant meetings, Mutant conferences the way they do over at DC in the Bat office? People sit around and make sure that the continuity of one book is not going to mess up the continuity of another book.

AK: Yeah, they have their summits. I haven't attended any of them because I'm still really new on the book, but they have their meetings. In fact, they have one coming up soon, which I'm probably going to go to. It should be fun. I think Andy [Kubert] is going to be there. I went to a *Ghost Rider* meeting and that was really interesting. It got the artists and writers together, and Bobby Chase, and editors, and assistant editors, and they just batted around ideas for 10 or 12 hours. They fleshed out what direction the characters and books were headed. They take it very seriously.

"I GOT ALL THE WOLVERINES FROM ISSUE #1 UNTIL NOW."

CM: How many books are involved in the Mutant office?

AK: Five or so I guess.

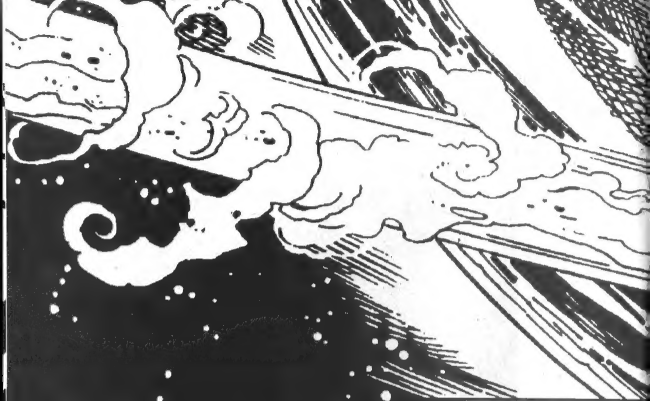
CM: I hear that *Excalibur* is coming under Harras's control.

AK: I don't know. Like I said, I'm pretty new.

CM: You haven't been involved in one of the Mutant titles before? **AK:** No. This is my first.

CM: How political of a win is that? I would imagine people are lined up begging for this job considering the fact that the royalties are so high on this book.

AK: How political was it? I really don't get involved...



"I THINK WOLVERINE IS A GRITTIER SUPER-HERO; IT WAS A MORE OF A NATURAL JUMP-OFF POINT FROM GHOST RIDER AND BLADE."

CM: Maybe I'm not using the right word there. Did you feel that there was competition for this job?

AK: I don't know. I didn't feel competition. I had a run of 12 or so issues on "Spirits of Vengeance" and I was looking for a change. I contacted both Bob Harras and Danny Fingeroth to see what might be available to me. This is what I chose to do.

CM: Did Danny offer you a book?

AK: Yeah he did.

CM: Which book was that?

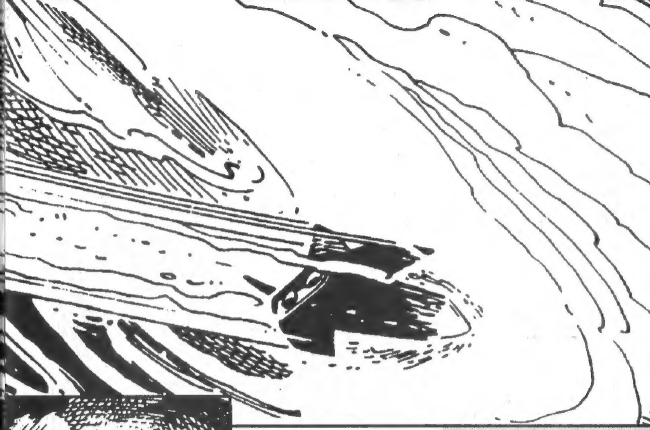
AK: *Spiderman.*

CM: Who was coming off that?

AK: They were looking for a regular art team. They had an artist do three or four issues here and three or four issues there, and they were looking for somebody regular.

CM: It's interesting that you should choose *Wolverine* over *Spider-Man.*

AK: I think Wolverine is a grittier super-hero; it was a more of a natural jump-off point from Ghost Rider and Blade, which is what I was doing. I see Spiderman as more of a lighter character.



CM: Let's go back. The beginning of your career is probably quite different than the beginning of other people's careers because you were hanging around comics from the time you were a child. When did you first realize that your father was a comic book artist? Did you talk about it at the dinner table?

AK: I knew he drew comics, sure, but I didn't think it was any big deal. My dad was home all the time, so that was different. He had a job where he didn't have to put on a suit and tie and go out and sell shoes, or whatever. My dad was always there. It's what I grew up with. I didn't know anything different. A comic book artist or not, it really didn't faze me that much.

CM: When did you first think you wanted to get into this business?

AK: I went away to college for medical illustration and studied at RIT in Rochester, New York. I realized that I wanted to get into comics when in all my spare time up there I was drawing–not comics necessarily, but things out of my head. When-

(REGARDING HIS FATHER) "I KNEW HE DREW COMICS, SURE, BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS ANY BIG DEAL."

ever anybody needed some kind of cartoon illustration or something fanciful they'd come to me for it and I'd jump to do anything that would be printed, for a party or a concert or anything like that. I figured if I do all this stuff in my spare time, why fight it. I think maybe I went away to do medical illustration because that interested me, and it still interests me. I like science and I like the art, so I put the two together. Maybe I was trying to find my own career rather than just follow what's been done.

CM: You didn't want to be Nancy Sinatra.

AK: Yeah, I didn't want to be Nancy Sinatra [laughs]. So I figured why not? It's a great job. I know I'll like doing it. I know where there's a great school to further my training, so why fight it.

CM: What was that like, going to your father's school? Weren't you automatically in an awkward position being that it was your dad's place?

AK: Yeah. At first people didn't know who I was. It was on a first-name basis and I liked it that way. I didn't want to be treated any different, and I wanted to melt with everyone else. When they found out who I was, it still wasn't a big deal. Maybe I just made it a big deal in my own head, but it really wasn't a big deal.

CM: Who were some of they guys who you graduated with?

AK: I graduated with Andy [Kubert], Ron Wagner, Jim Balent whose name I see popping up now and then, Graham Nolan.

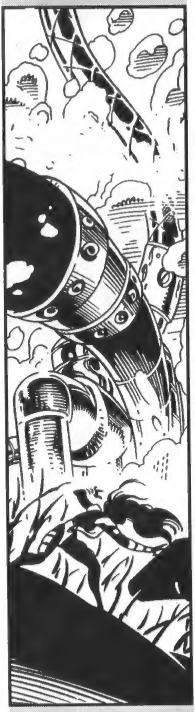
CM: How about Lee Weeks? Was he in your class?

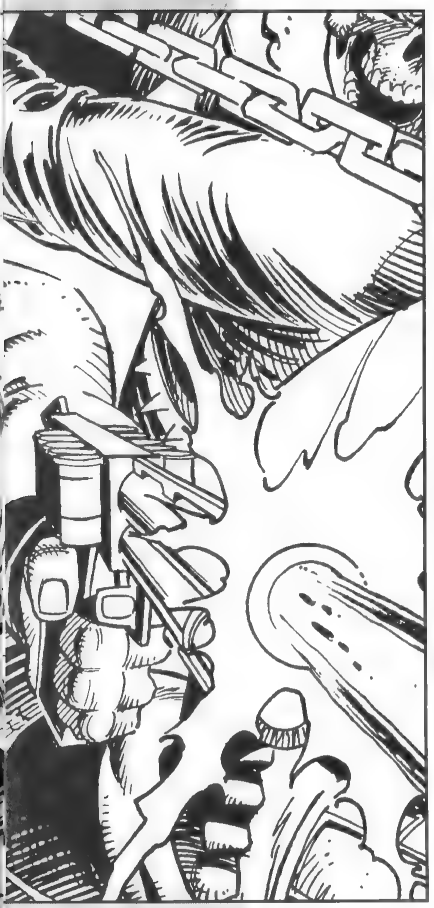
AK: No, he was a year behind me.

CM: You had a pretty interesting bunch.

"I FIGURED IF I DO ALL THIS STUFF IN MY SPARE TIME, WHY FIGHT IT."

AK: Yeah. It was a real mix.
CM: Are you guys still tight?
AK: I keep in touch with Ron, Lee, and of course Andy. The other guys I'm on a friendly basis with if I see them, but I don't call them every day.
CM: But there were some close friendships that developed in that place?
AK: Yeah.
CM: Tell me about the atmosphere of the school. In a musician's school, musicians get together and jam after class. What's it like with artists hanging around together and partying together? What goes on? Is there any art involved?
AK: Yeah. We have similar jam sessions. If we go out to a party, instead of jamming on instruments we might pass a pad around just to see what happens. I may start a drawing, somebody else may finish it just for the hell of it, just for fun.
CM: Did you guys put together any comic books or fanzines when you were there together?
AK: No. We had barely enough time to get our homework done.
CM: Let's talk about your first professional work. You once told me that you were 13 years old when you got a lettering job at DC.
AK: Yeah. I first started lettering when I was 12 or 13 and that was instead of going out and getting a real job like pumping gas or working at Dunkin' Donuts, which I also did. I showed an interest and my hand was steady enough, so my dad taught me how to letter and that's what I did.
CM: How about your first job as an inker or was it as a penciller? What came first?
AK: Well, pencil and ink. I pencilled and inked my own work to start with.
CM: For which company, which book?
AK: I think it was a class assignment in my second year and it was published in Pacific Comics' *Edge of Chaos*, I don't know what number, but I re-





member Gray Morrow did the lead story and my story was like a two-page story. It was originally a class assignment which I managed to sell.

CM: That must have been a big thrill.

AK: Oh it was great. It was a high that I'll never forget.

CM: Even being associated with Gray must have been something special.

AK: Believe me, my work couldn't hold a candle to the work that he was doing, but it was a learning experience. It was great.

CM: Who do you think is the best young artist today?

AK: I'd say Mike Mignola is the best.

CM: And of your father's generation, not including your father?

AK: My favorite is Moebius as far as that generation goes.

CM: What would you say is the key difference between Moebius and Mignola?

AK: It's style. They're both phenomenal storytellers. I think it just narrows down to style.

CM: There's a lot of talk that today's Marvel artists in particular are being pushed to draw more and more like Image artists. In fact, a good case in point was Herb Trimpe's return where he looked like a rehashed Rob Liefeld. I'm sure you saw that work. Is there any truth to this and how do you feel about it?

AK: Well, I don't know if there's any truth to it or not. I don't feel...nobody has ever told me to draw like someone else, whether I was at DC, or Marvel, or wherever. If somebody else is saying, "Well perhaps you should gear your style more like this," I mean Image is without a doubt today commercially successful. I'm sure that's what's on the back of some editors' minds.

CM: Let's look at that for a second. Why is Image commercially successful? What do you think is making their product sell?

AK: First of all, they have excellent artists working for them. Second of all, the quality

of their product is outstanding. Their color is phenomenal. Their covers look great. To tell you the truth, I haven't read any of their stories. I'm pretty much looking at the art.

CM: Well, that leaves you with about 99% of the people who buy Image product. I don't think that most people actually read them. In fact I think that the majority of those books sold are speculation sales. I don't think there's a million readers of anything.

AK: I don't think there is either.

CM: Certainly not 1.9 million, which some of these books are now boasting.

AK: 1.9 million?

CM: Well, *Turok* from Valiant, which was drawn by Bart Sears, printed 1.9 million, and retailers have been returning them to their distributors for the last three weeks.

AK: Oh my gosh!

CM: People are stuck with a lot of product.

AK: Whose fault is that?

CM: It's a combination. I don't think it's a matter of fault. I think it's misperception. I think that there is a belief amongst the new retailers who came from the baseball card industry that there's a much wider market than there really is. There's also a speculator base that's starting to get nervous and they're no longer buying 100 copies of things, they're starting to buy 10 copies. But there were plenty of people out there for a very long period of time who would buy 100 copies of something and sit on it just because it was a #1. You could get away with that when there was only one #1 coming out from each company in a given month. Today, in any given month, you have two, or three, or five #1's, and in the case of Image, since they renumber every third issue, there's five or six just from that company alone. So speculators are starting to get nervous. They're sitting on more and more product and they are starting to wake up to the fact that the piles and piles of comics they stockpiled are

"I DO COMICS BECAUSE I ENJOY IT. IT'S A FORM OF ESCAPISM, NOT INVESTMENT."

not going to be worth anything three or five years down the road. There's just too much.

AK: I don't know how anybody could be buying 10 copies of *Turok* expecting it to be worth something 10 years from now if there's 2 million copies out there.

CM: I'd be willing to bet dollars to donuts that the majority of people who bought that book bought at least one or two extras with the intention of seeing it go up the way *Harbinger* and *Solar* did.

AK: Well, I guess they're in for a surprise. I guess they might have to start reading their comics.

CM: Then there's the flip side of the coin where certain publishers are very conscious of putting out comic books that people *do* read and want to read. I think that DC has been very successful in putting out a quality product despite the fact that the market has gone in a different direction. They've stayed their course. You've been in the industry for a long time. Indeed, you are part of the family of the industry and I'm sure you talk about this with your dad and your friends and your brother. You must have a better read on all this in a certain sense. Where do you think the industry is going?

AK: I think it's going to have to go back to basics eventually. People seem to be buying comics, like you said, specifically because of collectibility and they're not reading the comics. I do comics because I enjoy it. I'm not doing it because of any reason other than that I enjoy drawing them. I enjoy drawing them for people who enjoy reading, and that's what I think comics are all about or should be all about. It's a form of escapism, not investment. If investment is a byproduct of buying the comics, hey, all the better. If people can make 10, 20, or a couple thousand bucks off buying a comic they like, that's great–put your kid through college. You've got to enjoy it, you've got to enjoy reading them. I draw them so people

can understand the story. The story that I draw, I do a certain way so people can get into it and get something out of it, hopefully escape for 10 or 20 minutes or however long it takes for them to read it.

CM: Let's get back to *Wolverine*. One of your peers told me that they thought Larry Hama was perhaps the only editor at Marvel who understood plot and story.

AK: He's not an editor anymore.

CM: Right. But my point is that he was saying that Hama is the only editor who knew anything at all about comic books. The rest are pretty much corporate hacks who didn't come from a comic book background. Now, without having you comment on that, I mean I don't want to get you into hot water, but I understand that Larry is tremendously respected as a creator. I know that he worked with Neal Adams for a long time over at Continuity. He's been tremendously successful. How much direction is he giving you, and how close are you guys working?

AK: Our relationship is really at the very beginning. I sat down with him a couple of times and we talked about it. I really can't comment too much on it because as of right now, I'm only on the fourth or fifth page of *Wolverine*, so it's really the beginning for me. I know that he's a well-respected writer and artist in his own right. I know Andy's had nothing but good experiences with him, and Ron Wagner has had nothing but great experiences with him, and I'm looking forward to a nice working relationship. I know that he's a great writer. Sorry I can't extrapolate more.

(ON ANATOMY) "BEFORE YOU CAN START EXAGGERATING, YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO BEGIN WITH."

CM: That's fine. Are you still studying drawing at all? Are there techniques that you're perfecting or working on, and aspects that you haven't covered?

AK: I study drawing every day.

CM: What does studying involve?

AK: Studying involves looking at other people's work. Just last night I was looking through (I still have it in front of me) an atlas of anatomy for artists. I was just looking to see where the muscles really go and what really happens. Before you can start exaggerating, you've got to know what it looks like to begin with. I think just by looking and by seeing, not just looking, you've got to understand what you're looking at. I think that's a form of study.

CM: I'm sure that when you're at conventions, potential artists, would-be wanna-be artists,

come over and show you their layouts and sketches. How many of these people are really looking at anatomy?

AK: Not a hell of a lot of them, unfortunately. From what I've seen, they're looking at other comic book artists and may or may not be making the same mistakes that they are, and copying mistakes. I mean, these artists may have been on a deadline crunch, or just had to rush through it or take a shortcut, or they can make shortcuts when an amateur can't. That's not the way to go. You've got to look at what the masters do, if you're going to look at anything. Or take a figure drawing class and see what's really happening.

CM: Do you paint at all?

AK: Very little. I color. I don't know if there's a difference, but I haven't done much full painting.

CM: Have you ever colored any of your own work?

AK: Yeah. I've colored a lot of my own work.

CM: What in particular? Anything that you've really liked?

AK: I have a hard time...some stuff I like, I don't know. I did a series for Comico some years back called "Jezebel Jade." I colored that and that came out

"YOU'VE GOT TO LOOK AT WHAT THE MASTERS DO, IF YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK AT ANYTHING."

okay. I have an easier time coloring other people's work than coloring my own for some reason.

CM: Which colorists do you like today?

AK: Sherilyn Van Valkenburgh. She colored our *Batman vs. Predator* book. She colored that beautifully.

CM: I thought that was a great story. There's not that many things that I read anymore. There's just too much coming out and too little time. But I read your *Batman vs. Predator* and I really enjoyed it. I thought it was top-notch stuff. For the most part, the Batman projects have been good. I don't remember exactly what it was that grabbed me, but you and your brother seemed to work well as a team.

AK: You've got to start with a good story, and Dave Gibbons did an excellent job of cluing us in to what he was looking for. He just...he hit it. He got it right on the button.

CM: How close to panel breakdown did he give you in the script?

AK: Well, Andy got the script. I forget what he did.

CM: Andy's younger than you, isn't he?

AK: Yes, he's two and a half yars younger.

CM: How different are you two in your styles?

AK: I think it may be easier to say how we're similar. I think we're similar in that we both realize that it's important to tell a clear story and that's what we try to emphasize.

CM: Let me stop you there for a second. John Buscema was a great storyteller, wouldn't you agree? And so was Gene Colan. But those guys were like day and night. Storytelling is more than a technique, it's a philosophy. Where are you guys similar in technique?

AK: In technique, we try to tell a dramatic story. What do you mean by technique?

CM: I'm using a generic term to get you to talk like an artist,

which is difficult for me because I'm not one.

AK: I am one and sometimes it's difficult to verbalize.

CM: I look at Bill Sienkiewicz and his early stuff looks like Neal Adams. In fact, almost everybody who came out of Continuity, their stuff looked like Neal.

AK: I think he's got a hand on a lot of things in there.

CM: So there you see similarities. I look at your father's stuff and at Russ Heath, and at a certain point they looked alike. I couldn't tell you *what* looked alike, but I could have mistaken one for another. I could have mistaken Jim Aparo for Neal Adams at certain times. You and Andy at one point, I bet, were very similar and you probably started to diverge at another point.

AK: I don't feel as though we were similar.

CM: No? Okay, I was guessing.

AK: I mean, I'm a lot closer to it so maybe it's more similar than I think. The way I feel it's similar insofar as is we're obviously both heavily influenced by my dad and maybe that's a takeoff point from where we were and where we still are similar.

CM: Who are some of the inkers that you like today? And who were the great inkers and why?

AK: I think Al Williamson is a great inker. He's also a great artist. I don't really like to label them as inkers. I'm an inker. I'm inking Ron Lim right now, and I think good inkers are good artists, and only good artists make good inkers, in my opinion. I think Dan Green is a great inker. He inked like six pages of my "Spirits of Vengeance" and he did a phenomenal job. My dad's a great inker. I think anybody would jump at the chance to have him ink their work. I mean, he can do things...

CM: Mark Stet is a great artist, but as an inker he "Tex's" everyone. You know, if Mark Texeira inks you, it looks like

his work. He's changed you and made you adapt to him. The same thing would be with Tom Palmer. Whether he's inking Ron Garney nowadays or Steve Epting you can tell that it's

meet Bill at a convention, and I was talking to him and he said he was interested in doing some inking some time down the road. So I asked if he could do it and he said yeah. Also

Tom Palmer's inks. There's other guys who are much more invisible, who are able to adapt more, who become chameleons to the pencillers beneath them. What would you prefer?

AK: It depends on the inker. If my dad's inking it...well my philosophy is on certain jobs, and nowadays, I am the penciller, I give the inker as many clues to what I'm thinking as I possibly can. After it leaves my table, it's no longer my work, now it's the inker's responsibility. I want the inkers to have as much flexibility in working over my drawing as they can. I don't want to hold their hand and make them do something where they're not comfortable. These guys are professionals and I've been fortunate in that most of the inkers I work with are outstanding artists. Bill Rheinhold was doing an outstanding job. He inked *Spirits ofVengeance* issues #5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12, I think. He's a good artist. That's what I was looking for when we were looking around for inkers. It was somebody who could draw well. I happened to

"I WANT THE INKERS TO HAVE AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY IN WORKING OVER MY DRAWING AS THEY CAN."

Chris Warner–I had him ink over me. Again, he's an excellent artist.

CM: Do you see yourself being involved in comics basically for the rest of your career, or is this a stepping off point into other avenues?

AK: For the rest of my career? That's a long time, you know. I see it as what I want to do right now, and you don't know where it's going to lead. If it leads into something else, I'll check it out.

CM: What else would you be interested in?

AK: I'd be interested in doing storyboards for movies. That would be a fun thing to do. Comics is something that I really enjoy doing. If I do storyboards for movies, that will be the sideline job where comics will be the thing I enjoy. I did a lot of advertising work because I wasn't fast enough to pull in enough money making comics, and it's like a trap because it's dry work, it's for the most part throw-away art, nobody sees it, nobody appreciates it, there's 50 hands in on one idea, and there's really no gratification. Comics is what I like doing.

CM: It's interesting that you should mention storyboarding. A lot of guys have tried to take that direction. Some of them have been very successful. You know that Jim Steranko recently storyboarded Francis Ford Coppola's *Dracula*.

AK: Did he?

CM: Yeah. I hear Mike Ploog is storyboarding now, also. I forget what he's doing. There's a lot of guys who have made it that way. Tom Palmer, despite the fact that he inks two books, remains active in advertising.

AK: I know. That's a tough thing.

CM: It's very interesting that a lot of people have never had enough faith in comics to just do it, or even see it as something they wanted to do for the rest of their lives, but I think that today's generation of comic artists are much more like you said, very "MTV." They're really much more rock 'n' roll oriented, and comics is a legit career. It's a lifetime ambition to do it, to do it right, and to do it

"YOU CAN'T APPRECIATE A WINDFALL I THINK UNLESS YOU HAVEN'T HAD ONE."

forever. But some artists get burnt out or disgusted and they walk away for a little while.

AK: Or they get hot too quickly and it's almost as if...you've got to pay your dues I think. Not that you have to, but you can't appreciate a windfall I think unless you haven't had one. Do you know what I mean?

CM: Yes. I agree with that whole paying dues aspect of it. I think that's an important part of the legacy of any industry, comics especially. I've always appreciated the work of people who have a background in comics, who grew up liking what I liked, and reading what I read. By dues, I understand what you mean–going from working on some of Marvel's New Universe titles to finally getting jobs that pay you royalties is a real win, as opposed to being 21 years old and copying comic books, and stepping in shit and coming out with *X-Force* #1, and then all of a sudden you're a big rock star in your own mind and you're making a million dollars and you have zero appreciation of the entire scope of the industry. There are plenty of people who haven't paid dues, and they're not really part of the fraternity of the industry. They're just lucky.

AK: Not to put them down, there's absolutely nothing wrong and I don't wish any ill fate on anyone.

CM: Don't worry. I said it, you didn't. I don't wish anyone ill either, but I'm uncomfortable with what's happened.

AK: It doesn't really affect me one way or the other. I mean I'm happy for these guys. If they're doing great, great.

CM: You were mentioning speed before as far as advertising, you said you weren't fast enough to make money in the industry. How long does it take you to do a page nowadays?

AK: I do a page a day.

CM: Is that good speed for you? Are you happy with that pace?

AK: No, I'm not happy with it. I wish I could do more.

CM: How about your dad? What can he do?

"I'M PENCILLING FOR AN INKER SO I HAVE TO PUT QUITE A BIT MORE WORK INTO THE PENCILLED PAGE."

AK: He can do four or five in a day. But it's a little different because he's pencilling for himself. He's pencilling and he's going to be inking it. I'm pencilling for an inker so I have to put in quite a bit more work into the pencilled page.

CM: Why don't you pencil and ink?

AK: Because I can't pencil and ink a monthly book.

CM: You're not fast enough?

AK: Nope. I wish I was, but that's the way it is right now.

CM: Do you think you ever will be?

AK: To be able to pencil and ink a monthly book?

CM: To even be able to double your speed?

AK: Only if I change my style. I put a lot of shit in. I'd have to simplify and at this point I don't want to.

CM: You said you'd been inking Ron Lim. He's pretty fast.

AK: Yeah, he's real fast. He does like four or five pages a day.

CM: That's really an incredible speed for a young guy. Do you ever do anything in your spare time?

AK: What spare time? I went to the beach yesterday.

CM: How busy are you?

AK: Pretty busy. I mean I'm pen-

(REGARDING HIS WIFE) "SHE DOESN'T READ COMICS. I'M TRYING TO GET HER INTO IT, BUT IT'S HARD."

cilling one book and inking another, and I still do lettering for *Heavy Metal*, and a lot of little jobs come up here and there. I keep pretty busy. My spare time I spend with my family.

CM: Not drawing?

AK: Not drawing. Absolutely not drawing.

CM: What do you like doing?

AK: I've got a motorcycle, I take it out and cruise. I guess that's about it.

CM: How old are your kids?

AK: Two and five. A boy and a girl.

CM: How old are you?

AK: Thirty-three.

CM: Does your wife get into comics at all?

AK: Not really. She's an artist. I mean she appreciates good work. I show her my work all the time and she's critical, she's very critical and can point out things that I get too close to and can't see anymore. As far as reading comics, no she doesn't read comics. I'm trying to get her into it, but it's hard. Comics have a stigma.

CM: I believe that there will soon be a shake-out in the industry. Do you agree?

AK: Definitely.

CM: When it comes, what type of

people will survive and why?

AK: I think, without talking about individuals, the type of product that will survive is quality. The products that are either repetitions of what's been successful or have been done before and not even good copies, I just think that the quality work will survive. I hope that the story will become important to people, and the story within the comic book itself will be looked at as important again.

CM: What do you think about the fact that a lot of older professionals can't really get work in the industry right now?

AK: I don't know what to make of it. They are great artists. They are excellent artists.

CM: Are you aware of what I just said?

AK: Well I was aware of...somebody mentioned to me about Gray Morrow having a difficult time. I don't know why. I think his work is just outstanding.

CM: Well, the thing that you hear is that their work is a little old-fashioned and that's not what people are buying anymore.

AK: Maybe they have to update it, I don't know.

CM: But is that possible? When a guy's been doing what he's been doing for 35 or 40 years, do they have to update it or should there just be an awareness... Could Moebius get a gig drawing the X-Men right now?

AK: I bet he could.

CM: I think for the most part kids are not attuned to that type of work.

AK: I think each artist has to be happy with himself. If they are happy...I can't understand why these guys can't get work. Obviously these guys can get work, maybe they can't get the kind of stuff that's going to sell really well for one reason or another.

CM: Jim Aparo was just taken off of *Batman* because they said his work was stale. Joe Staton was taken off *Green Lantern*. I can give you name after name.

AK: Well, maybe these guys have

just become tired. Maybe they have lost their enthusiasm. I don't know. I really truly don't know.

CM: My theory is that they are looking to make young rock stars still, and that's part of the whole program. They're selling artist's names as much as they're selling characters.

AK: Not at Marvel they're not.

CM: Well, maybe not any more. Perhaps they learned from that mistake.

AK: I mean as far as I'm concerned my book is...the books that I've done have sold fairly well, not because of me. I don't feel as though it's because of me. I think right now for me it's the characters and I think that's what happens with some of the other guys that have become mega-successful. If opportunity arrives and you're lucky enough to be on a book that is high profile, then you've got to take that opportunity and bust your ass. □

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